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“We must use our lives to make the world a better place to live, not just to acquire things. That is what we are put on the earth for.” —Dolores Huerta

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HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

American Hispanic/Latino history is rich, diverse and long, with immigrants, refugees and Spanish-speaking or Indigenous people living in the United States since long before the nation was established.

And, bringing with them traditions and culture from Mexico, Spain, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and other Latin American and Iberian nations, America’s Hispanic population continues to grow, reaching a record 62.5 million in 2020, or 18.7 percent of the U.S. population.

From early Spanish colonialism to civil and worker rights laws to famous firsts to recent Supreme Court decisions on immigration, here’s a timeline of notable events in U.S. Hispanic and Latino history.

Early Spanish Explorers Reach America

April 2, 1513

Searching for the “Fountain of Youth,” Spanish explorer [Juan Ponce de Leon](#) lands along the Florida coast, claiming the territory in the name of the Spanish crown. He would return in 1521 to establish a colony, but his party, attacked by Native Americans, were forced to retreat to Cuba, where he died.

Sept. 8, 1565

Spanish admiral and explorer Pedro Menendez de Aviles lands at what will become the settlement of [St. Augustine](#), Florida, near the spot Ponce de Leon reached 52 years earlier. Now the oldest continually inhabited American city, St. Augustine was under Spanish rule for 256 years, and British rule for 20 years and served as a Civil War battle site.

1609-1610

Conquistador Don Pedro de Peralta settles [Santa Fe New Mexico](#), making it the oldest capital city in North America, the oldest European community west of the Mississippi River and the first foreign capital captured by the United States, in 1846, during the Mexican-American War. The original capital of New Mexico had been established by Don Juan de Onate in 1598 at San Juan Pueblo, but it was moved to Santa Fe in 1610.

May 1, 1718

Spanish priest Father Antonio Olivares founds the [Mission San Antonio de Valero](#), better known as The Alamo, the first mission in San Antonio, Texas. Formed to convert Native Americans to Christianity, it became a fort and site of rebellion in 1835.

March 2, 1917

President Wilson signs the [Jones-Shafroth Act](#), granting U.S. citizenship to [Puerto Ricans](#) and creating a bicameral legislature in the island territory. With the United States about to enter [World War I](#), it also gives America a stronghold and allows Puerto Ricans to join the U.S. Army. Eventually, 20,000 Puerto Ricans are drafted to serve during the conflict, many charged with guarding the important Panama Canal

Spotlight profiles

Cesar Chavez (1927-1993)

A true American hero, **Cesar Chavez** was a civil rights, Latino and farm labor leader, a genuinely religious and spiritual figure, a community organizer and social entrepreneur, a champion of militant nonviolent social change and a crusader for the environment and consumer rights. Cesar’s career in community organizing began in 1952 when he was recruited and trained by Fred Ross, a legendary community organizer who was forming the San Jose chapter of the Community Service Organization (CSO), the most prominent Latino civil rights group of its time. Cesar spent 10 years with the CSO, coordinating voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, leading campaigns against racial and economic discrimination and organizing new CSO chapters across California



Julia Alvarez (1950-present)

Dominican American writer **Julia Alvarez**, 73, has been enchanting readers with her words since the early 1990s. She was born in New York City in 1950 before her family moved to the Dominican Republic when she was a baby. They stayed there throughout Alvarez’s childhood until her father’s involvement in a failed attempt to overthrow the militant dictator forced the family to flee to the United States in 1960. The traumatic event has since made its way into several of Alvarez’s works, including the poem “Exile” in which she recounts the night her family fled. She has become one of the most critically revered Latina writers and has published poems, novels and essays throughout her career



Juan Felipe Herrera (1948-present)

**Juan Felipe Herrera** was the 21st United States Poet Laureate from 2015-2017—the first Latino to be appointed to the post. The son of migrant farm workers in California, Herrera’s was a nomadic childhood. His mother recited poetry and taught him songs from the Mexican Revolution. Inspired by her spirit, he has spent his life, as The Washington Post put it, “crossing borders, erasing boundaries and expanding the American chorus.” Herrera’s political activism dates back to his college efforts to bring visibility to Mexican- Americans, and their stories and histories, as a member of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. He continues his work as a performance artist and activist on behalf of migrant and indigenous communities and at-risk youth.



Antonia Novello (1944-present)

When **Dr. Antonia Novello** was appointed Surgeon General of the United States by President George Bush in 1990, she was the first woman—and the first Hispanic—ever to hold that office. Her appointment came after nearly two decades of public service at the National Institutes of Health, where she took a role in drafting national legislation regarding organ transplantation. Through the prestige and authority of this office, the Surgeon General can more effectively exhort and educate the public on pervasive health issues. As surgeon general, Novello focused on the health of young people, women, and minorities. She issued reports and spoke out on under-age drinking, smoking, drug abuse AIDS (especially among women and adolescents), childhood immunization and injury prevention, and improved health care for Hispanics and other minorities.



Sources

- 1.<https://www.history.com/articles/hispanic-latinx-milestones>
- 2.<https://www.communityrenewalsociety.org/blog/hispanic-heritage-month-spotlight-profiles>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Dues

P-CoC ADVISORY PARTICIPANTS

Friendly Reminder to All P-CoC Advisory Participants

As we approach the end of the month, we would like to kindly remind all Advisory Participants to submit their annual dues.

Providing your dues by month-end would be ideal for bookkeeping purposes and to help us prepare our financial reports for presentation at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated, and we thank you in advance for your cooperation!

For any questions or assistance, please feel free to reach out to Dr. Hans at [budget@p-coc.org](mailto:budget@p-coc.org).

Click [Here](#) to Pay Now

(Additional Donations are Welcome from All Other Supporters)

UPCOMING EVENT

Igniting Legacy. Shaping Futures.

Young Adult Forerunner Symposium on Black African Empowerment

Join a dynamic gathering of visionary young leaders, thinkers, and change-makers at the Young Adult Forerunner Symposium on Black African Empowerment — a bold platform designed to amplify Black African voices, celebrate cultural heritage, and empower the next generation to lead with purpose.

Through thought-provoking panels, interactive workshops, and powerful storytelling, this symposium explores themes of identity, innovation, resilience, and transformation. It’s more than a conversation — it’s a movement.

Come connect, be inspired, and step into the power of cultural pride.

On November 9th, 2025 at 5pm EST. Via [Google Meet](#)

The Esther Care Project

Community Outreach Committee

P-CoC Launches “The Esther Care Project”

P-CoC is proud to launch The Esther Care Project, an initiative focused on providing essential clothing and food supplies directly to individuals in need in remote villages across Africa. The first phase of the project is beginning in Kumasi, Ghana, led by a passionate Advisory board member and social worker, Esther Frimpong, dedicated to community impact.

A clothing and food drive will kick off in December. Stay tuned for how you can be part of this meaningful mission.

This initiative marks the beginning of a broader mission to empower individuals toward self-sufficiency and long-term sustainability. The Esther Care Project is one of many efforts P-CoC will continue to launch under the overarching theme “Bringing Humanness into Humanity.” More than just a charity, it’s a movement to equip people with the tools and support they need to build independent, thriving lives.

As we grow this effort, we’re actively building partnerships to create real, actionable change, both locally and globally.

**Support those who support us!**

Patronize the businesses of our sponsors and partners—find details on our website.

**Meet us at our Tabling!**

Meet some of our participants at our Tabling Events around town, and reach out to see if we can bring a table to your event—email us at [info@p-coc.org](mailto:info@p-coc.org).

**Join the P-CoC Team!**

Looking to get involved? Join or volunteer with P-CoC and make a difference! Visit <https://www.p-coc.org/join> to learn more.

Stay engaged!

Follow us on our social platforms for updates, events, and more ways to get involved.

**WHO We Are!**

We are a collective that cultivates a culture of support, embracing the ideology of one human race while celebrating ethnic uniqueness and the diverse skin tones that enrich our shared humanity.

**WHAT We Do!**

Through our race, color, and ethnicity-centered initiatives to address marginalization, we create dynamic spaces for service, networking, collaboration, and leadership development, empowering everyone to embrace fair and equitable coexistence.

**HOW We Do It!**

Our outreach includes cultural exchange events that celebrate ethnic heritage, positive public messaging to combat stereotypes, and our local social circle hubs for collaborative solution-oriented approaches to societal challenges, all aimed at fostering equitable coexistence.